THE PURPOSE OF ADVERBS
Adverbs are words that describe or modify verbs, adjectives, and other adverbs. Adverbs express ideas of time, place, manner, cause, and degree.

Examples: MODIFYING A VERB: John attends the Writing Center regularly. MODIFYING AN ADJECTIVE: John is a very conscientious student. MODIFYING ANOTHER ADVERB: John writes his papers really well.

Like the adjective, the adverb qualifies other words by answering questions about those words.

How? The student worked diligently. (Worked how?)
Where? Mary went home to write her paper. (Went where?)
When? John handed in his paper yesterday. (Handed in when?)
To what degree? The paper was unusually well-written. (How well-written?)

FORMING ADVERBS
Adverbs can have inflectional endings for comparative and superlative degrees—often formed by adding -ly to the adjective form.

Adjective form: radiant certain odd impressive
Adverb form: radiantly certainly oddly impressively
Some adverbs will use the same form as adjectives. The adjective may not have a suffix or may already have an –ly ending.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No suffix:</th>
<th>straight</th>
<th>late</th>
<th>far</th>
<th>right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-ly suffix</td>
<td>early</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>weekly</td>
<td>hourly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some words are almost always adverbs but are not identified by an –ly ending:

- also
- anyway
- ever
- somewhat
- fast
- indeed
- yesterday

Adverbs form the comparative and superlative degrees similarly to adjectives. An -er is added to the positive form to make the comparative degree, which shows a comparison between two things. An -est is added to the positive form to make a superlative degree, which shows a comparison between one thing and several others.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive:</th>
<th>soon</th>
<th>late</th>
<th>fast</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparative:</td>
<td>sooner</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>faster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlative:</td>
<td>soonest</td>
<td>latest</td>
<td>fastest</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

If the adverb ends in –ly, more and most are used to form the degrees of comparison.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive:</th>
<th>quickly</th>
<th>tenderly</th>
<th>loudly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comparative:</td>
<td>more quickly</td>
<td>more tenderly</td>
<td>more loudly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>superlative:</td>
<td>most quickly</td>
<td>most tenderly</td>
<td>most loudly</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Use less and least with the adverb to show a lesser degree.

Example: quickly less quickly least quickly
Some adverbs from the comparative and superlative degrees irregularly:

Positive:  good     badly     much     far
Comparative: better   worse      more      farther/further
Superlative: best      worst     most      farthest/furthest

Note: Some prepositions may be used as adverbs to express a spatial relationship.
Example: John let the cat in. *(No object of the preposition)*

ADVERB TYPES
- **Interrogative** adverbs ask a question—*where, when, why, and how.*
  Examples: Why do you work so hard?
            Where are you going?

- **Relative** adverbs introduce relative or subordinate clauses—*where, when, why* and *how.*
  Examples: When you are ready, we will go.
            You did not tell me where you want to go.

FUNCTION AND POSITION
- The adverb is usually near the word it modifies, but it can be found anywhere in the sentence.
- When the adverb modifies another adverb or an adjective, it is in front of the word it modifies.
- If the adverb is modifying a verb, the adverb can appear almost anywhere—before or after the verb, between the helping and main verbs, or at the beginning or end of the sentence.
  Examples: BEFORE THE VERB: Mary often stays late.
            AFTER THE VERB: Mary stays, often late.
            BETWEEN THE HELPING AND MAIN VERB: Mary will often stay late.
            BEGINNING OF THE SENTENCE: Often Mary stays late.
            END OF THE SENTENCE: Mary stays late often.
Adverbs can modify entire clauses or sentences. Because they can modify so many different elements in the sentence, their positions can be more varied than other parts of speech.

The eight meanings which adverbs can express are as follows:

1. Manner—Mary writes well. (Shows how Mary writes)
2. Degree—Mary’s paper is too long. (Describes a quality of the paper)
3. Frequency—Mary attends the Writing Center often. (Shows how frequently Mary attends)
4. Time—Mary wrote her paper yesterday. (Tells when she wrote her paper)
5. Place—Mary wrote her paper here. (Tells where she wrote her paper)
6. Negation—Mary never writes her paper in the library. (Negates that she writes in the library)
7. Affirmation—Mary really likes to write. (Affirms that she likes to write)
8. Qualification—Mary will probably get a high grade on her paper. (Expresses the quality of certainty or probability)

COMMON PROBLEMS WITH ADVERBS

- Do not confuse adverbs with adjectives, especially well with good. Well is an adverb; good is an adjective.
- Avoid double negatives. For instance, do not use hardly, scarcely, only, or never with no or not. One negative word to a clause is enough.
PRACTICE

Practice Exercise A
Choose the correct form in parentheses in the first five sentences.

1. The sick man (was not, was) scarcely able to sit up in bed.
2. The sergeant did not want (any, no) advice from (anyone, no one).
3. They (could, could not) hardly hear each other above the crowd.
4. Mr. Sand's work does not allow him (any, no) margin of error.
5. I (do not never, never) anticipate trouble.

Practice Exercise B
Underline the adverbs in the following sentences.

1. My co-workers seldom attend the annual conference.
2. Have you ever seen this machine in operation?
3. Often Mr. Sands was in a very cheerful mood.
4. He responded intuitively to the call for help.
5. Sometimes he drove fast, but he was not reckless.

Practice Exercise C
Complete each of these sentences by inserting an adjective or an adverb. If an adjective is required, insert the adjective printed in parentheses. If an adverb is required, insert the adverb formed from the adjective printed in parentheses.

1. The president of the company looked __________ on my suggestion. (cold)
2. Please return to the office as _________ as you can. (quick)
3. We shall need _______ more information before we can give you an answer.
   (considerable)
4. I will ________ call you at your office at the time you have suggested. (sure)
5. The mistake she made has _______ caused her to feel __________ . (sure, bad)
**Practice Exercise D**

Insert the word *only* at the proper places in these sentences. The sense in which *only* is to be used in the sentence is indicated by the words in parentheses.

1. This offer holds good for ten days. (not more than ten days)
2. Ms. Simpson is able to do this work. (no one else can do it)
3. It will take a few minutes to get the figures. (not more than a few minutes)
4. I am calling to see whether I can be of further service. (for no other reason)
5. A person gets what he is worth. (not more than he is worth)

**Practice Exercise E**

In the blanks in these sentences insert *good* or *well*—whichever is correct.

1. She has been ill, and she still looks far from _______ .
2. Your handwriting is _______, and you write _________ .
3. He has done _______ in his new position.
4. Do you really feel __________ enough to come to the office?
5. He has not been a ________ man since he had that severe attack of illness last winter.

**Practice Exercise F**

Underline the correct form in parentheses.

1. Mary has felt (bad, badly) since her last cold.
2. Jim arranged the layout (crooked, crookedly).
3. The host nation gave the delegates a (real, really) friendly reception.
4. An unknown arsonist set fire to (most, almost) all the houses on Quivira Road.
5. (Most, Almost) all the votes have now been counted.